

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Enhancing WtW/FSS Programs with a Unique Theme To Assist in Keeping Clients Motivated</b></p>
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**Texoma Council of Governments  
WtW Participants are in the Driver's Seat  
With FSS**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Challenge</b></p>
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Many housing authorities do not have the internal capacity to provide the level of case management and the necessary supportive services required by program participants. In addition, finding innovative ways to keep participants motivated is a continuing challenge.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Solution</b></p>
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The Texoma Council of Governments (TCOG) has been in the community for 35 years and has established a very good relationship with the social service agencies as well as the faith base organizations. They contribute this success to developing very comprehensive Memorandum of Understandings that clearly state the services to be provided and/or received. For example, their strong partnership with Texas Department of Human Services has allowed the TCOG staff to train the case workers on the policies and procedures for the Welfare to Work program to ensure compliance with program implementation. In addition, TCOG's partnerships with various faith-based organizations have allowed them to have some services provided exclusively for FSS/WtW clients.

TCOG also thought that it was very important for a successful program to have the "right" case manager who could relate to the clients. As a result, the Case Manager, the first point of contact, is the key to their program success.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Implementation</b></p>
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- TCOG realized that it was extremely important to combine the resources and goals of the two programs and strongly encourages WtW families to participate in both. By joining FSS, WtW recipients are able to access more supportive services and reach their goal of self sufficiency more quickly. As a result, they have created a strong linkage between their WtW and Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) Programs. To enhance their FSS program, Sally Hodges, the FSS Program Manager, developed a unique theme and marketing strategy for the program. The title for the program is **NASCAR** (FSS graduates will be able to provide their own Nutrition, Automobile, Schooling, Childcare, Apppearance, and Rent/utilities); **WINSTON** (We (the clients) Intend Nothing Short of Taking Over (our lives) Now); **CUP** Your goals are set by the (Choices -U -Pick).

. Other marketing slogans that support the goals and mission of the program are:

- They (the clients) are in the driver's seat with FSS
- Pick your rate of acceleration
- Determine your finish

The FSS Program has created a NASCAR environment in their office by decorating with racecars, banners, posters of NASCAR drivers, etc. Additionally, the FSS Program Manager has developed analogies similar to those of the drivers of NASCAR. These include:

- The drivers all started with a dream that became their goal. The client (s) set reachable goals to achieve self-sufficiency;
- Each of the drivers has sponsors. The client (s) may also have sponsors: TCOG for Rental assistance, TANF, Workforce Texoma for Choices, and/or WIC,
- Each of the drivers has had hardships; injuries, wrecks, engine problems, etc. The client (s) have hardships (lack of education, lack of funds, unemployed)
- Each of the drivers are winners, they just finish the race at different times. The client (s) will also finish at different times.

The FSS Program Manager has also developed the “Start Your Engines” Newsletter. This newsletter features various articles that includes a note “From Your Crew Chief,” the FSS Program Manager, the “Winner’s Circle” which includes the newest graduates from the program, “Lap Numbers” lists everyone with a birthday during that particular month, “Rookies” the newest members to the FSS family, “Refueling” nutritious recipes for the busy clients, and “Tire Changes” creative and economical ideas for household maintenance.

The FSS Program Manager is continuously developing different marketing strategies as well as implementing various programs to keep the clients interested and motivated. In the fall of 1999 the program offered to the clients “Finish Line Fashion.” To ensure that clients had the proper attire for interviewing, a clothing drive for business wear was held and the generous individuals of Grayson and Fannin Counties donated the needed items. The clients earned the clothing by working in the “Finish Line” one hour for each household. In addition, the Program Manager conducts various workshops such as a Coupon Workshop that is geared towards teaching the benefits of using coupons and the money to be saved by using them. Also to relief the stress of gift giving during the holiday season, the FSS program Manager hosts a fun filled workshop to help clients make inexpensive gifts for friends and family.

<b>Results</b>
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TCOG has 100% of its WtW clients participating in their FSS program. Their program is such a success that there is currently a waiting list to participate in the FSS program. They have had 23 graduates from their FSS program with 12 of these graduates purchasing homes.

<b>Contacts</b>
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